

## Message Text

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12

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00

USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 OMB-01 AID-05 AGR-05 EB-07 SR-02

ORM-01 TRSE-00 /070 W

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O 260742Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4140

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PASS NSC

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAID SREF VS

SUBJECT: TITLE II PL-480 RICE FOR EMERGENCY REFUGEE NEEDS

1. ELLERMAN INFORMS US THAT 100,000 METRIC TONS OF FY 75 PL-480 RICE AS SET ASIDE AS EMERGENCY REFUGEE FOOD AID FOR RVN UNDER TITLE II IN ACCORDANCE WITH EXECUTIVE-LEGISLATIVE UNDERSTANDING ON HUMPHREY AMENDMENT. GVN HAS NOW REQUESTED 100,000 METRIC TONS OF RICE AS REFUGEE RELIEF UNDER TITLE II ARRANGEMENTS TO MEET EMERGENCY NEEDS GENERATED BY REFUGEE MOVEMENT NOW TAKING PLACE FROM MR-1 AND FROM HIGHLANDS OF MR-2 TO SOUTHERN COASTAL REGIONS MR-2 AND PERHAPS ALSO TO OTHER SOUTHERN AREAS.

2. GVN IS CURRENTLY MEETING REFUGEE RICE NEEDS FROM ITS OWN STOCKS. THE CURRENT CONFUSION AND TURMOIL ASSOCIATED WITH THE MOVEMENT OF REFUGEES OUT OF MR-1 AND CERTAIN AREAS OF MR-2 DOES NOT PERMIT US TO MAKE FULLY ACCURATE ASSESSMENT OF THE NUMBERS OF CURRENTLY EXISTING REFUGEES IN THESE AREAS OR ADDITIONAL REFUGEES THAT WILL BE GENERATED. REPORTS CURRENTLY INDICATE THERE ARE AS MANY AS  
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500,000 REFUGEES IN DANANG AND 200,000 ELSEWHERE IN MR-1

WHO EXPECT TO MOVE SOUTH, AS WELL AS SOME 140,000 REFUGEES WHO HAVE ARRIVED ON THE COAST AND 200,000 EN ROUTE FROM THE HIGHLAND AREAS OF MR-2. THERE IS NO WAY OF KNOWING NOW HOW MANY WILL FINALLY BE DRIVEN FROM THEIR HOMES IN THE CURRENT NVA OFFENSIVE, NOR HOW MANY WILL BE ABLE TO REACH SECURE AREAS. IT IS ALSO UNCLEAR HOW LONG THE REFUGEES WILL CONTINUE TO BE DEPENDENT ON RELIEF FEEDING, BUT IT SEEMS UNLIKELY TO BE LESS THAN A YEAR. THE AMOUNT OF GVN REQUESTS WILL FEED 1,000,000 PEOPLE FOR ABOUT SIX MONTHS AT THE CURRENT RATION OF 500 GRAMS A DAY.

3. THE QUANTITY OF GVN IN-COUNTRY STOCKS IN CENTRAL VIETNAM THAT MAY HAVE BEEN LOST TO NVA/VC ACTION OR WHICH MAY HAVE NOT BEEN ABANDONED IS ALSO CURRENTLY UNKNOWN. THESE STOCKS COULD AMOUNT TO 80,000 METRIC TONS OR MORE. IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, AND GIVEN THE TRAGIC CONDITION OF THESE REFUGEES AND THE NEED FOR THE GVN TO PROVIDE PROMPTLY HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE FOR SHELTER, FOOD, WATER AND MEDICAL NEEDS, THE U.S. MISSION MOST STRONGLY ENDORSES THIS GVN REQUEST. IT MAY VERY WELL BE THAT TOTAL REQUIREMENTS WILL GO BEYOND 100,000 METRIC TONS OF RICE, BUT WE SEE THE NEED FOR AT LEAST THIS AMOUNT UNDER ANY CONCEIVABLE SET OF CIRCUMSTANCES.

4. WE REQUEST THAT THIS 100,000 MT OF TITLE II RICE BE AUTHORIZED AND SHIPPED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. IN THE INTERIM, WE ASK THAT WE BE AUTHORIZED TO BORROW TITLE I STOCKS CURRENTLY IN COUNTRY TO TITLE II FOR IMMEDIATE USE IN THE REFUGEE RELIEF FEEDING PROGRAM.

5. WE PROPOSE THAT A TITLE II AGREEMENT BE ON A GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT BASIS. WE ANTICIPATE THAT THE ACTUAL DISTRIBUTION TO REFUGEES WILL BE MADE BY THE GVN, AS IT IS CURRENTLY DOING. WE DO NOT BELIEVE ANY ALTERNATIVE EXISTS, SINCE ONLY THE GVN CAN COMMAND LOGISTICS AND STORAGE ASSETS AND HAS THE AUTHORITY TO MOVE GOODS THROUGH THE PRESENT SYSTEM OF SECURITY CONTROLS. AT THE SAME TIME WE FULLY EXPECT THE GVN TO USE THE VOLAGENCIES TO THE FULLEST EXTENT POSSIBLE IN THE DISTRIBUTION AS WELL AS IN MONITORING THE RICE MOVEMENT.

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6. WE FULLY REALIZE THAT THESE DATA ARE NOT AS COMPLETE AS WE WOULD LIKE THEM TO BE BUT THE SITUATION IS CHAOTIC AND WE NEED IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON CONSIDERATION AND RESPONSE TO THESE GVN PROPOSALS.

7. WE WANT TO BE ABLE TO DISCUSS U.S. RESPONSE TO THIS REQUEST WITH GVN IN AT LEAST PRELIMINARY WAY NOT LATER THAN FRIDAY, SAIGON TIME. REQUEST ADVICE SOONEST. DECON: 3/31/76

LEHMANN

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** RICE, REFUGEE RELIEF, PL 480 TITLE 1  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 26 MAR 1975  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** izenbei0  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1975SAIGON03516  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D750105-0218  
**From:** SAIGON  
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**Line Count:** 116  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION EA  
**Original Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 3  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** izenbei0  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 28 JUL 2003  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <28 JUL 2003 by KelleyW0>; APPROVED <20 NOV 2003 by izenbei0>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
05 JUL 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** TITLE II PL-480 RICE FOR EMERGENCY REFUGEE NEEDS  
**TAGS:** EAID, SREF, VS  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006